

Oxfordshire Golf Captains Knockout Pairs Final 2025

With storm Amy showing her teeth the Studley Duo of Hans Menzel and Dave Drew arrived at the neutral venue of Hadden Hill to do battle!!

Walking to the Club house Captain Chris Spearing was seen loading his buggy and he gave us a quick wave whilst his partner Simon Berry who was not rushing to play straight from work after booking a day's holiday was practicing his skills on the range having not played since their semi final victory as he had been sunning himself in Malta.

The Studley duo went to the bar taking full advantage of Roger Davis's members discount and drinks were served. Roger then joined us and welcomed us to his club. Chris came in and suggested we tee off early as Storm Amy was only going to get worse. The offer was declined as lunch was ordered but not yet served, Captain Grumpy left and could be seen taking chipping practice with Simon.

With lunch being somewhat rushed and Hans taking a foil wrap to the course.

On the first tee the Drayton duo were in full wet weather gear but Studley won the toss (would it be the only thing they won all day!!) with DD wearing shorts and Hans still getting dressed. Shots were agreed with Hans getting 1, DD 5 and Capt G getting **10 !!**, all 4 had good drives on the opening par 5 and Roger left us to it wishing us all good luck.

Captain Grumpy hooked his 2nd shot into the trees left but it came back out into the middle of the fairway whilst in comparison DD hit his 3rd into a tree and it stayed in it for a long time before dropping into a pile of cone straw. Hans missed the green long with his third, Simon was left and Captain Grumpy just short. Capt G went first and chipped in from 30 yards for a **4 net 3, eagle**.

He wasn't so grumpy before hitting a good drive down the middle of the short par 4, 2nd fairway, Simon drove out of bounds right and Hans was in a good position down the left wing, DD sliced his drive right but had his own luck hitting a tree and staying in play but with no shot directly to the green. Capt G had 116 yards to a back flag, played his short iron to the front left of the green at which point it kicked right, up the ridge and into the hole for another **eagle 2 !!!!!**

On the 3rd tee box Capt G was looking more like a **"Golden Eagle"** only to slice his drive out of bounds right, Simon drove long of the dog leg left fairway into the rough and the somewhat stunned Studley duo both found the fairway. Simon hit a great shot out the rough carrying the ditch short of the green. The Studley duo both laid up with a shot to play with. Simon only got down in 3 more shots and DD won the hole with a 5 net 4.

Hans found the 3rd fairway with his drive whilst DD again found a tree on the left trying to cut the corner off the dog leg left par 4 but it bounced into the fairway. The **"Golden Eagle"** hit his drive left and just survived finding the ditch whilst Simon drove through the fairway again but had a shot to the green. The **"Golden Eagle"** duffed his 2nd but found the green from 160 yards, drawing his shot round a tree and proceeded to sink the putt for a **4 net 3 birdie** taking Drayton back to 2 up.

Some normality kicked in and we halved the next 3 holes. Studley won the 8th with both players getting a 4, so back to one down and that's how the front 9 finished after Simon and Hans halved the par 3 9th

DD was claiming a moral win of the front 9 ,1 up discounting the first 2 holes but the **"Golden Eagle"** was still smiling.

The weather on the back 9 got worse, Simon won Drayton the 10th, the 11th was halved by DD & "**Golden Eagle**", on the 12th whilst DD was taking relief in the woods his umbrella was well caught in the slips by Simon whilst his trolley went crashing to the ground. Hans's umbrella went flying up by the green and again it was Simon to the rescue. Hans won the hole with a par so we were back to 1 down and morally 1up!! Simon won the 13th with a bogey 5 and both the Drayton duo found the green on the par 3 14th with the "**Golden Eagle**" getting a par to go 3 up.

DD won the 15th with a 5 nett 4 and halved the 16th in 5 with a knee trembling 6 footer to keep the game alive.

The 17th par 3 of 188 yards was playing at least 200 yards to a back tee with Storm Amy blowing into us. Studley agreed on a strategy of DD going for the green which is well protected with bunkers both front and left whilst Hans would lay up. DD hit a good drive but for the third par 3 of the day just found the top lip of the left bunker to finish in the sand. Hans's lay up did not go to plan, going left through the trees onto the neighbouring fairway, the "**Golden Eagle**" landed short of the bunkers perfectly placed in the middle of the fairway. Simon joined DD in the Bunker. Hans played a worldly through the tress to find front right of the green with the "**Golden Eagles**" chip finding the front left. Simon chipped out of the bunker long and DD found the middle of the green. Hans 2 putted for a 4, Simon Duffed his chip leaving himself a 6 footer, the "**Golden Eagle**" put his first putt 5 foot long, DD lagged his putt which was unforgivable as he was on a perfect line. Simon Missed his putt to seal the match so it was left to the "**Golden Eagle**" to sink his putt, which he duly did to seal the match winning 2 & 1. In DD's eye it was morally a halve!!

We knew that the first two holes would always tip the balance with the dodgy Drayton handicaps for once not being an issue!! The game was played in great spirit in very challenging conditions but we finished in the dry with the "**Golden Eagle**" flying down the 18th in his buggy to get the drinks in.

Dave Drew.